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AUTHOR Katz, Malcolm
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ABSTRACT

Staff development coordinators in the Georgia school systems responded to a survey to assess their perceptions of the administrative needs of their school districts. Of the 61 needs surveyed, staff development coordinators selected staff morale and group dynamics as their most critical areas of need, followed by evaluating program effectiveness and implementing changes. Long- and short-term planning was their third-highest-ranked need. Comparisons between the ranking of staff development coordinators and Georgia's school principals and superintendents who responded to identical surveys one year earlier are shown. The results of the two surveys are similar. Three of the coordinators' ten highest-ranked needs were people/relationship centered, five were leadership/supervision centered, and two were administrative/technical needs. Twenty-two were identified as role-specific for staff development coordinators. The rankings of all 61 needs by mean score and the percent of coordinators rating each as "High Need" are shown. The response rate to the survey was 83.5 percent. (JD)

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Prepared for
The Georgia Educational Leadership Academy
Dr. Jimmy Puckett, Director

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by

Malcolm Katz, Ed.D.
Associate Professor
Educational Leadership & Research
Georgia Southern College
November, 1988

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Background

In the spring of 1988, the Georgia Educational Leadership Academy authorized a study of Georgia's staff development coordinators as to the administrative needs of their local school systems. This study continues with a new set of participants an unbroken series begun as a pilot study in 1984 and sustained as a statewide study of superintendents' perceptions of administrative needs in 1985, 1986, and 1987. In 1987, Georgia's elementary and secondary school principals were also surveyed as to the needs of their individual schools. All of these studies used the same survey instrument, exhibited high levels of reliability with high response rates, and made possible comparisons among the groups surveyed.

The major purpose of this survey of staff development coordinators is to ascertain local system needs as viewed by those professionals charged by their school districts, and indirectly by the State of Georgia[1], with responsibility in staff development. Because the Georgia Educational Leadership Academy has the state-level responsibility for the staff development of local school leaders, it is vitally interested in local needs, to assure that its training and development priorities have taken into account the realities at the grass roots. The Academy believes that this component will provide information from a third critical perspective. Staff development coordinators may be expected to see priorities somewhat differently, through a district-wide lens and yet with a more close-range sense of what's happening in the trenches than do superintendents as they, the s.d.c.'s interact more openly and directly with school staff. And, on the other hand, while they are less school-based than principals, the staff development coordinators might be expected to be somewhat less responsive to board and community priorities than are superintendents. Importantly, two facts must kept in mind as comparisons among these three groups are made. First, superintendents and staff development coordinators have been surveyed as to the needs of their *districts*, while principals have viewed needs in terms of their own *individual schools*. Second, the surveys of superintendents and principals were carried out in the spring of 1987, while the survey of staff development coordinators was done one year later.[2]

The Survey

Each of Georgia's staff development coordinators was asked to respond to a survey instrument in May, 1988. One hundred and fifty-seven of the list of 188 provided by the Georgia Department of Education responded, providing a response rate of 83.5 per cent. The assessment

[1]Each of Georgia's local school districts is required by state policy to designate a staff development coordinator with general responsibilities for planning, developing, and coordinating staff development activities for the staff of that district. (Georgia Public School Standards, 1988)

[2]Comparisons between these two years are justified, in part, because survey results have shown remarkably consistent results. For example, of a total of 61 needs surveyed, a list of only 12 is sufficient to include all of the needs ranked by superintendents as the ten highest for each of three years, 1985, 1986, and 1987.

instrument was the same as that used previously for superintendent and principals, one which has remained unchanged since 1984.[3]

Sixty-one items describing common administrative needs at the district and school levels are organized into six categories:

1. Organization and Administration
2. Management of Students
3. Communications Management and Public Relations
4. Management of Facilities, Services, and Finance
5. Management of Instruction
6. Personnel Management

Each staff development coordinator was asked to rate each of the 61 needs from zero ("no-need") to four ("high-need") as the respondent perceived that need for his or her local school system.[4]

Major Findings

The Ten Highest Ranked Needs in Georgia's School Systems: 1988

The ten administrative needs which received the highest mean scores when rated by staff development coordinators are shown below in rank order.

Table 1

Staff Development Coordinators: The Ten Highest Ranked Needs of Georgia's School Systems in 1988

Rank #1	Staff morale, group dynamics
Rank #2	Evaluating program effectiveness; implementing changes
Rank #3	Long, short term planning
Rank #4	Knowledge of curriculum/instruction
Rank #5	Instructional supervision
Rank #6	Supervision, evaluation of staff
Rank #7	Principal's role (in management of instruction)
Rank #8	School climate, learning environment
Rank #9	Knowledge/use of leadership techniques
Rank #10	Interpersonal relationships, rapport

[3]The needs assessment instrument was developed in collaboration with Ms. Carol Budack at Georgia Southern College.

[4]An entirely new and different study with superintendents and principals was undertaken also by the Academy in 1988. While the content is somewhat related to this study of staff development coordinators, the new studies of superintendents and principals do not use the same instrument as the subject of this report.

Ranking at the top of all 61 needs in the view of staff development coordinator's is "staff morale, group dynamics." Both superintendents and principals had ranked this need in 1987 among their first ten, superintendents at 5th for their districts, and principals at 9th for their individual schools.

Ranking second for staff development coordinators is "Evaluating program effectiveness; implementing changes." If there were a consensus need for all three groups, this would be the one. Superintendents rated it as their districts' third ranked need in 1987, while principals made it their schools' first-ranked need.

Third-ranked among all 61 needs was "Long, short term planning". Staff development coordinators ranked this need higher than both superintendents (#8) and principals (#15). While these are all relatively high as priorities among 61 possible selections, the rank of 3rd for staff development coordinators may be reflective of their special assignment, to plan and submit proposals in the face of state-directed timelines, and to align their programs with statewide reforms during a period fairly rapid change. (see rank #2, above.)

Ranking 4th for staff development coordinators is "Knowledge of curriculum/instruction" their first of a series of three needs that focus on the teaching-learning process. Ranking 5th is "Instructional supervision", and ranking 6th is "Supervision, evaluation of instruction." It is noteworthy that among the three survey groups, staff development coordinators alone rank "Knowledge of curriculum/instruction" higher than either "Supervision, evaluation of instruction" or "Instructional supervision." (These latter two ranked #'s 1 and 2 for superintendents and #'s 5 and 6 for principals in 1987.) Also, the staff development coordinators were the only group to rank "Instructional supervision" above "Supervision, evaluation of staff," the former connoting the continuing review of the teaching/learning process, and the latter emphasizing activities related to evaluation.

"Principal's role (in the management of instruction) is ranked 7th by staff development coordinators, showing that they share with superintendents a high level of concern about this need, most typically expressed in the field as the dilemma between the management and instructional leadership roles of the principal. Superintendents have given this need a consistently high rank (5th or 4th in 1985-87). Importantly, principals showed a very much lower level of concern about their own "Principal's role", ranking it as 21st.

Ranked 8th by staff development coordinators is "School climate, learning environment", a need that ranked 22nd for superintendents in 1987 and 20th for principals in that year. This indicates a much higher level of concern with school climate and environment than either superintendents or principals. This may imply that the elements of "climate" such as orderliness and safety in classes and school functions, and a sense of collegiality among staff, are at a lower level of quality in the view of staff development coordinators than was perceived by superintendents and principals.

Ranked 9th for staff development coordinators is "Knowledge/use of leadership techniques," indicating perceptions of need quite close to those of superintendents who ranked this need 7th, but

quite divergent from principals who ranked this need, which speaks directly to leadership at their own schools at 32nd. In three years of statewide surveys of superintendents this need has never been ranked lower than 8th. Thus, staff development coordinators and superintendents perceive at the district-wide level a much higher priority need for "leadership techniques" than do principals at their own buildings. Query: are principals more positive about their leadership than they have a right to be?

Ranking 10th is "Interpersonal relations, rapport". Here, again, staff development coordinators and superintendents share a common perception as to the level of this need, while principals rated it much lower at 24th. Three possible explanations are posited here: one, central office interpersonal relationships (to each other, to community, and to schools) are more problematic (less good) than relations within individual schools or between schools and their constituents; two, those latter relationships are not as healthy as principals think they are, or three, superintendents and staff development coordinators have a lower tolerance for the uncertainties in the interplay of interpersonal relationships than do principals.

Comparing Staff Development Coordinators' Rankings (1988) with Superintendents' Rankings (1987)

Staff development coordinators and superintendents shared nine of their highest ten ranked needs, a remarkable agreement given the 61 needs from which both made their ratings. Viewing their school districts from two quite different perspectives these very different groups of professionals have a striking degree of similarity in their views as to which areas of need require greatest attention in their districts.

TABLE 2

Items Common to Staff Development Coordinators and Superintendents Among Their Highest Ten Ranked Needs

Need	Staff Development Coordinators Rank (1988)	Superintendents Rank (1987)
Staff morale, group dynamics	1	5
Evaluating program effectiveness, implementing changes	2	3
Long, short term planning	3	8
Knowledge of curriculum/instruction	4	6
Instructional supervision	5	2
Supervision, evaluation of staff	6	1
Principal's role (is must for instruction)	7	4
Knowledge /use of leadership technique	9	7
Interpersonal relations, rapport	10	9

Within these shared needs, however, these are some critical differences between staff development coordinators and superintendents as to which belong at higher levels of priority. While all rank high among all 61 possible administrative needs, there is disagreement as to their order.

Comparing Staff Development Coordinators Rankings (1988) with Principals' Rankings (1987)

In contrast to the marked similarity between staff development coordinators' and superintendents' rankings, a rather different result emerges when we compare the staff development coordinators rankings of needs (as applied to their districts) with the principals' ranking of needs (as applied to their individual schools)

First from the principals' perspectives, they give high ranks to several needs that were of decidedly lower priority to staff development coordinators. For example, principals rated six administrative needs among their top ten that ranked 15th or below for staff development coordinators.

TABLE 3

Six High Ranked Principals' Needs as Compared with Staff Development Coordinators' Rankings

Need	Ranked By Staff Development Coordinators[5]	Ranked By Principals[5]
Stress management	15	2
Computers, data processing	20	3
Legal considerations	29	4
Time management	22	7
In-service for staff (certified and classified)	27	8
Classroom management	19	10

[5]Based on survey data of 1987 for principals, and of 1988 for staff development coordinators. Also, principals ratings in terms of schools; staff development coordinators in terms of school systems.

As shown below, staff development coordinators and principals did rank these four of the 61 needs among their highest ten ranked needs:

TABLE 4

Four Needs Common to Staff Development Coordinators and Principals Among the Highest Ten Ranked Needs of Each Group

Need	Rank By Staff Development Coordinators	Rank By Principals
Staff morale, group dynamics	1	9
Evaluating program effectiveness; implementing changes	2	1
Instructional supervision	5	6
Supervision, evaluation of staff	6	5

While each group selected a different #1 (highest ranked) need by a wide margin, they show a high degree of agreement as to the relative priority of the other three shared needs.

In summary, where staff development coordinators and principals disagree as to needs, they disagree strongly; and where they agree, they tend to agree strongly. On matters that fall within a rubric of "general management", such as handling stress, managing computers, legal concerns, and time-management, they disagree. On matters of educational program (evaluation, dealing with change, and supervision) they agree.

Comparing Staff Development Coordinators with Superintendents and Principals

Finally, in these comparisons, we can review the needs that each group ranked within their highest ten needs, noting again that staff development coordinators and superintendents applied the instrument to their school districts while principals applied it to their own schools.

TABLE 5

Comparing Ten Highest Ranked Needs of Three Professional Groups

Rank	Staff Development Coordinators	Principals	Superintendents
1	Staff morale, group dynamics	Evaluating program effectiveness; implementing changes	Supervision, evaluation of staff
2	Evaluating program effectiveness; implementing changes	Stress management	Instructional Supervision
3	Long, short term planning	Computers, data processing	Evaluating program effectiveness; implementing changes
4	Knowledge of curriculum/instruction	Legal considerations	Principal's role (in management instruction)
5	Instructional supervision	Supervision, evaluation of staff	Staff morale, group dynamics
6	Supervision, evaluation of staff	Instructional supervision	Knowledge of curriculum/instruction
7	Principal's role (in management instruction)	Time management	Knowledge/use of leadership techniques
8	School climate, learning environment	In-service for staff (certified and classified)	Long, short term plan
9	Knowledge/use of leadership techniques	Staff morale;group dynamics	Interpersonal relationships rapport
10	Interpersonal relationship, rapport	Classroom management	School-parent communication

Summary

The Ten Highest Ranked Needs of Staff Development Coordinators:

1. Staff development coordinators selected three among the top ten needs that can be characterized as "people-centered", "feeling-tone", or "consideration" needs. These are:
   - Rank #1 Staff morale, group dynamics
   - Rank #8 School climate, learning environment
   - Rank #10 Interpersonal relations, rapport
2. Staff Development Coordinators selected five needs among their highest ten that might be characterized as "leadership" needs:
   - Rank #2 Evaluating program effectiveness; implementing changes
   - Rank #5 Instructional supervision
   - Rank #6 Supervision, evaluation of staff
   - Rank #7 Principal's role (in management of instruction)
   - Rank #9 Knowledge/use of leadership techniques
3. Staff Development Coordinators selected two needs among their highest ten that might be characterized as administrative-technical needs:
   - Rank #3 Long, short term planning
   - Rank #4 Knowledge of curriculum/instruction
4. Based on the above, the broad heading of "instructional leadership" might be used to describe the predominant needs of school districts as viewed by staff development coordinators.
5. Staff development coordinators view district-wide needs in very much the same way as do superintendents, each sharing nine of the first ten needs of the other.
6. Despite that remarkable convergence, staff development coordinators and superintendents disagree as to which needs they place in the top half of that "top ten".
7. The needs that principals perceive to be of highest priority at their own schools overlap but do not match closely the needs identified by staff development coordinators and superintendents for their districts.
8. Clearly, building-level needs as perceived by principals are not the same as district-level needs as perceived by superintendents and staff development coordinators. They are similar to some degree, but different on many key needs. Most especially, staff development coordinators and superintendents do not convey through their ratings of needs the sense of day-to-day pressures to cope and manage as was conveyed by the principals.
9. The omission of "In-service for staff (certified and classified) "from the list of top ten ranked needs for staff development coordinators is of special interest. (They ranked it at 27th). More on that puzzling fact, later.

The Role of the Staff Development Coordinator

How do staff development coordinators rank a set of needs that are identified with their tasks and responsibilities? We look next at the staff development coordinators' rankings of 22 needs selected by the author from among the total set of 61 surveyed. These are needs that might be thought of as central to the job description of the staff development coordinator. For purposes of comparison, we show also the rankings for those selected needs by superintendents (for their districts) and for principals (for their individual schools).

TABLE 6

Needs Identified with the Role of Staff Development Coordinators: Rankings by All Three Groups

	Principals 1987	Superintendents 1987	Staff Development Coordinators 1988
Knowledge/use of leadership techniques	32	7	9
Knowledge of curriculum/instruction	11	6	4
Long, short term planning	15	8	3
Time management	7	30	22
Decision making, problem solving	23	18	24
Resource utilization, professional, community	37	49	35
Systems for information dissemination	26	15	30
School-community communication	19	12	17
School-staff communication	31	11	12
Computer and data processing	3	24	20
Evaluating program effectiveness; implementing changes	1	3	2
Innovations, research	12	42	31
Classroom management	10	16	19
School climate, learning environment	20	22	8
Instructional supervision	6	2	5
Supervision, evaluation of staff	5	1	6
Staff morales, group dynamics	9	5	1
Staff involvement	17	19	21
In-service for staff (certified and classified)	8	14	27
Recruitment, selection of personal	38	37	36
Career ladders	30	56	48
Stress management	2	27	15

If we use the rankings by the superintendents and principals as benchmarks by which to evaluate the rankings of s.d.c.'s on these needs the results are:

TABLE 7

Needs Identified with the Staff Development Coordinators Role that are Ranked HIGHER by Staff Development Coordinators than by Principals and Superintendents

Need	Staff Development Coordinator Rank
Staff morale, group dynamics	1
Long, short term planning	3
Knowledge of curriculum/instruction	4
School climate, learning environment	8

TABLE 8

Needs Identified with Staff Development Coordinators' Role that are Ranked LOWER by Staff Development Coordinators than by Principals and Superintendents

Need	Staff Development Coordinators Rank
Supervision, evaluation of staff	6
Classroom management	19
Staff involvement	21
Decision-making, problem solving	24
In-Service for staff (certified and classified)	27
Systems for information dissemination	30

Comments

Having previously commented on the four items in Table 7, we turn to those of Table 8.

"Supervision, evaluation of staff"

While lower in rank, it is in the top ten, and confirms the high priority of this need for schools and districts.

"Classroom management"

To be expected. Principals and superintendents tend to have greater concern with this critical dimension of the teaching-learning process.

"Staff involvement"

While staff development coordinators' ranking of this item is not much below that of superintendents and principals, we are surprised that it was not greatly higher .
Some of the most persistent and pervasive problems in staff development have to do with achieving real staff involvement, and at several stages, in the staff development process. First, the involvement of staff in basic decisions to be made. What are the needs? How to interface these with district goals? And so on. Second, staff involvement in the programs themselves. How to share leadership with staff? How to gain true engagement of staff in the development programs, rather than mere compliance?

The relatively low ranking of this need could indicate that staff involvement may not be of great importance to staff development coordinators. If that is the case, Georgia will experience fundamental problems with staff development in local districts.

"Decision-making, problem solving"

It comes as no surprise that staff development coordinators rate this need lower then either superintendents or principals, perhaps implying that staff development coordinators do not perceive themselves instrumental in decision-making.

"In-service for staff (certified and classified)"

One of the most puzzling results of the survey is the relatively low ranking of this need, lower than either principals or superintendents. Given the extraordinary needs across the state for staff development to accompany changes at the local level that have been called for by state reform (for example, a clinical approach to supervision for evaluation) and given a significant funding priority to staff development calling for local needs assessment, planning proposals, etc., one would have expected this to be ranked much higher by the staff development coordinators, given their central role in all of that.

One possible explanation and one which, if true, would be cause for statewide concern is that the majority of staff development coordinators have very limited professional preparation for that role and little or no experience in planning and carrying out staff development programs. If so, they may feel inundated by the recent statewide initiatives and may feel that the needs for in-service education in their districts are already being fulfilled.[6]

[6]It should be noted, however, that while this need was ranked at 27th, 25.5 per cent of all staff development coordinator's gave it a rating of "High Need", making it the item that is 15th highest ranked need according to that criterion.

Second Level Needs of Special Interest

A second approach in our search for the high priority needs of staff development coordinators (other than by ranking according to their mean scores) is to look closely at those needs for which a substantial number of staff development coordinators rated as "High Need", the highest possible rating offered by the survey instrument. Such a rating indicates that the respondent believed that to be a critical need in his or her district. We will look now at a set of needs which rank *below* the first ten by mean score, but which received high-need ratings from at least 25 per cent of the staff development coordinators.

Table 9

Items Ranking Below the Highest Ten but Rated as "High Need" By 25 Per Cent or More of Staff Development Coordinator's

Item	Rank By Mean Score	Percentage of Staff Development Coordinators Rating Item As A "High Need"
Stress management	15	31.9%
Defined K-12 curriculum	13	29.3%
Computers and data processing	20	25.8%
Defined expectancies, disciplinary procedures	23	25.7%
In-service for staff (certified and classified)	27	25.5%
Time management	22	25.3%
School-community communication	17	25.0%

These seven items could well be added to our list of those ranked among the ten highest, as an added source of guidance as to what these staff development coordinators would likely recommend as topics for local or state-wide attention, including staff development programs.

Staff Development Coordinators' Ratings Of Needs by Category

The needs shown on the survey instrument are arranged in six categories. We look now at how staff development coordinator's rated the needs within each of those categories. This provides a picture of the specific needs within a larger arena of interest as to which are of greater or lesser concern to staff development coordinators. The six categories are:

Organization and Administration
Management of Students
Communications Management and Public Relations
Management of Facilities, Services, Finance
Management of Instruction
Personnel Management

TABLE 10

Organization and Administration: Rank of Items by Staff Development Coordinators

Higher Group - Among Top 20

Item	Rank By Mean Score Among 61 Items	Percentage of Staff Development Coordinators Rating Items As A "4" (High Need)
Long, short term planning	3	39.1%
Knowledge of curriculum/instruction	3	39.1%
Knowledge/use of leadership techniques	9	27.2%
Organization for curriculum development	14	24.3%

Lower Group - Below Top 20

Time Management	22	25.3%
Decision-making, problem solving	24	18.1%
Crisis, conflict management	25	22.2%
Legal considerations	29	17.2%
Resource utilization: professional and community	35	12.5%
Management by objectives	38	14.7%
Updating policies, procedures	45	11.3%
Knowledge/use of policies, goals	46	7.3%
Board-administrator relationships	51	11.9%

TABLE 11

Management of Students: Rank of Items by Staff Development Coordinators

Higher Group - Among Top 20

Item	Rank By Mean Score Among 61 Items	Percentage of Staff Development Coordinators Rating Items As A "4" (High Need)
Guidance and Career Planning	18	24.5%

Lower Group - Below Top 20

Defined expectancies, disciplinary procedures	23	25.7%
Communication with students	26	18.0%
Student involvement	28	13.3%
Discipline, due process	33	17.9%
Student publications	55	6.1%

TABLE 12

Communications Management and Public Relations

Rank of Items by Staff Development Coordinators

Higher Group - Among Top 20

Item	Rank By Mean Score Among 61 Items	Percentage of Staff Development Coordinators Rating Items As A "4" (High Need)
School-parent communication	11	23.0%
School-staff communication	12	24.5%
School-community communication	17	25.0%
Computer and data processing	20	25.8%
Lower Group - Below Top 20		
Systems for information dissemination	30	23.2%

TABLE 13

Management of Facilities, Services, Finance

Rank of Items by Staff Development Coordinators

Higher Group - Among Top 20

Item	Rank By Mean Score Among 61 Items	Percentage of Staff Development Coordinators Rating Items As A "4" (High Need)
NONE		

Lower Group - Below Top 20

Budgeting, preparation and control	42	19.1%
Accounting, record keeping	44	13.0%
Managing federal and state projects	47	10.3%
Maintenance and operation	49	7.8%
Energy conservation	52	2.7%
Purchase and distribution	53	8.2%
Financial reports	54	6.2%
Capital outlay projects	56	11.0%
Transportation	57	10.9%
School food and nutrition	57	6.7%

TABLE 14

Management of Instruction

Rank of Items by Staff Development Coordinators

Higher Group - Among Top 20

Item	Rank By Mean Score Among 61 Items	Percentage of Staff Development Coordinators Rating Items As A "4" (High Need)
Evaluating program effectiveness, implementing changes	2	48.4%
Instructional supervision	5	45.2%
Principal's role	7	43.3%
School climate, learning environment	8	33.1%
Defined K-12 curriculum	13	29.3%
Scheduling, lesson planning, time on task	16	23.6%
Classroom management	19	24.8%

Lower Group - Below Top 20

Innovations, research	31	21.7%
Testing, placement, promotion/retention	32	14.0%
Varied resources to meet needs	34	15.9%
Assessing, reporting student progress/grading	40	10.2%
Appropriate materials/equipment	41	12.1%
Vertical/horizontal organization	43	14.0%
Extra curricular programs	59	3.8%

Table 15

Personnel Management

Rank of Items of Staff Development Coordinators

Higher Group - Among Top 20

Item	Rank By Mean Score Among 61 Items	Percentage of Staff Development Coordinators Rating Items As A "4" (High Need)
Staff morale, group dynamics	1	49.7%
Supervision, evaluation of staff	6	45.9%
Interpersonal relationships, rapport	10	29.9%
Stress management	15	31.9%
Lower Group - Below Top 20		
Staff involvement	21	19.1%
In-service for staff (certified and classified)	27	25.5%
Recruitment, selection of personnel	36	18.5%
Task differentiation, clarity	37	16.6%
Staff, corrective discipline	39	13.4%
Career ladders	48	18.5%
Absenteeism	50	16.6%
Merit plans	60	18.5%
Employee benefits	61	5.7%

Comments on Ratings of Needs by Category

Organization and Administration

Three of the highest ten ranked needs are to be found in this category. Staff development coordinators rankings of these thirteen needs are much more similar to those of superintendents in 1987 than to principals'.

Management of Students

We note that "guidance and career planning" is the highest ranked of this category. In our 1987 studies, both principals and superintendents gave a slightly higher rank to "defined expectancies; disciplinary procedures" than did staff development coordinators.

Communications Management and Public Relations

Four of the five items in this category are ranked in the top 20 of all survey items, demonstrating the high priority need for improved communications and public relations from the perspective of the staff development coordinator. This is also reflected in the perspectives of principals and superintendents of prior surveys, and is in striking agreement with the specific rankings of superintendents as is shown below:

Table 16

Comparing Staff Development Coordinators and Superintendents on Needs in "Communications Management and Public Relations"

Need	Rank By Staff Development Coordinators	Rank By Superintendents
School-parent communication	11	10
School-staff communication	12	11
School-community communication	17	12
Computer and data processing	20	24
Systems for information dissemination	30	15

Management of Facilities, Services, Finance

Little concern is expressed by staff development coordinators for the needs in this category, a result which is quite similar to that of the surveys of superintendents and principals. All three groups rank "Budgeting, preparation and control" at the top of this category.

Management of Instruction

Not surprisingly, four of the highest ten ranked needs of the survey are found within this category, and an additional three are found among the highest twenty. Thus, seven of the top 20 ranked needs as rated by staff development coordinators are in this category.

Personnel Management

Morale, supervision, evaluation, and interpersonal relations stand at the head of this group, and are all ranked among the highest ten of the survey. Almost one in two staff development coordinators find that "staff morale, group dynamics" is a "high need" in his/her district.

It is noteworthy, we think, that "Recruitment, selection of personnel" is of relatively low concern to the professionals responsible for the development of personnel. Why, in the face of the relative scarcity of highly qualified candidates for vacant positions (indeed, a shortage that will become more serious and that will broaden over the next several years) is this so? We noted this same low-level of concern by superintendents (37th) and principals (38th) in 1987. We believe it may be an unwarranted indifference to a need that requires serious attention.

Summary and Conclusions

Georgia's staff development coordinators, a position or function that all Georgia school districts are required to designate, responded to a survey to assess their perceptions of the administrative needs of their own school districts. Of the 61 needs surveyed, staff development coordinators selected staff morale and group dynamics as their most critical need, followed by "evaluating program effectiveness; implementing changes". Long and short-term planning was their third highest ranked need.

Comparisons between the rankings of staff development coordinators and Georgia's principals and superintendents who responded to identical surveys one year earlier are shown. Staff development coordinators view district-level concerns much more similarly to superintendents than to principals; nine of the s.d.c's ten highest ranked needs appeared on the list of superintendents' highest ten administrative needs, while only four are shared between s.d.c.'s and principals.

"Instructional leadership" can be used as the broad heading to describe the predominant needs of school districts as viewed by staff development coordinators. Three of their highest ten ranked needs were people/relationship centered, five were leadership/supervision centered, and two were administrative/technical needs.

Several needs were evaluated by s.d.c.'s at distinctly lower levels of concern than was expected. For example, "Staff involvement" was ranked at 21st and "In-service for staff (certified and classified) at 27th. Reasons for these and other rankings of the 61 needs within six categories are suggested.

Twenty-two needs were selected by the author as role-specific for staff development coordinators. Their rankings of these needs are compared with those of principals and superintendents. The rankings of all 61 needs by mean score and the per cent of s.d.c.'s rating each need as "High Need" are shown. The response rate for the survey was 83.5 per cent.

The Georgia Educational Leadership Academy, sponsor of the study, is provided with information that informs its decisions as it works statewide with all local coordinators of staff development. The study also provides the Academy with a third component of its study of needs at the grass-roots to supplement its findings from studies of superintendents and principals in 1987.

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Table 17

Staff Development Coordinators Assessment of Administrative Needs, 1988, Listed by Rank by Mean Score

Rank	Need	Mean Score	Percentage of Staff Development Coordinators Rating As A "4" (High Need)
1	Staff morale, group dynamics	3.2293	49.68%
2	Evaluating program effectiveness, implementing changes	3.1975	48.21%
3	Long, short term planning	3.1111	39.07%
4	Knowledge of curriculum/instruction	3.0850	39.07%
5	Instructional supervision	3.0701	45.22%
6	Supervision, evaluation of staff	3.0064	45.86%
7	Principal's role	2.9045	43.31%
8	School climate, learning environment	2.7834	33.12%
9	Knowledge/use of leadership techniques	2.7815	27.15%
10	Interpersonal relationships, rapport	2.7707	29.94%
11	School-parent communication	2.7226	23.03%
12	School-staff communication	2.7208	24.50%
13	Defined K-12 curriculum	2.7006	29.30%
14	Organization for curriculum development	2.7000	24.31%
15	Stress management	2.6879	31.85%
16	Scheduling, lesson planning, time on task	2.6688	23.57%
17	School-community communication	2.6579	25.00%
18	Guidance and career planning	2.6405	24.50%
19	Classroom management	2.6369	24.84%
20	Computer and data processing	2.5987	25.83%
21	Staff involvement	2.5860	19.11%
22	Time management	2.5828	25.33%

Table 17 (cont'd)

23	Defined expectancies, disciplinary procedures	2.5817	25.68%
24	Decision-making, problem solving	2.5800	18.12%
25	Crisis/conflict management	2.5099	22.15%
26	Communication with students	2.5098	18.00%
27	In-service for staff (certified and classified)	2.5032	25.48%
28	Student involvement	2.5000	13.33%
29	Legal considerations	2.4771	17.22%
30	Systems for information dissemination	2.4275	23.18%
31	Innovation, research	2.3121	21.66%
32	Testing, placement, promotion/retention	2.2866	14.01%
33	Discipline, due process	2.2632	17.88%
34	Varied resources to meet needs	2.2548	15.92%
35	Resource utilization: professional, community	2.2365	12.50%
36	Recruitment, selection of personnel	2.2357	18.47%
37	Task differentiation, clarity	2.2293	16.56%
38	Management by objectives	2.1987	14.67%
39	Staff, corrective discipline	2.1783	13.38%
40	Assessing, reporting student progress/ grading	2.1720	10.19%
41	Appropriate materials/equipment	2.0939	12.10%
42	Budgeting, preparation and control	2.0552	19.13%
43	Vertical/Horizontal organization	2.0191	14.01%
44	Accounting, record keeping	1.9388	13.01%
45	Updating policies, procedures	1.9020	11.33%
46	Knowledge/use of policies, goals	1.9000	7.33%
47	Managing federal and state projects and programs	1.8844	10.34%
48	Career ladders	1.8408	18.47%
49	Maintenance and operations	1.7983	7.83%

Table 17 (cont'd)

50	Absenteeism	1.7834	16.56%
51	Board-administrator relationships	1.7748	11.92%
52	Energy conservation	1.6939	2.74%
53	Purchase and distribution	1.6871	8.22%
54	Financial reports	1.6824	6.16%
55	Student publications	1.6376	6.08%
56	Capital outlay projects	1.6301	11.03%
57	Transportation	1.5630	10.92%
58	School food and nutrition	1.5630	6.71%
59	Extra curricular programs	1.4904	3.82%
60	Merit plans	1.4650	18.47%
61	Employee benefits	1.4013	5.73%